

# AYLLIT – Assessment of the Literacy of Young Learners

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# Aims

To develop a method for primary school teachers to use in the classroom assessment of reading and writing:

- Narrative based
- Linked to CEFR
- Based on evidence of actual language development over time

# Starting point

- Two classes in Bergen to follow over 2 years  
(10/11 – 12/13 years) (37 children)
- Penguin Young Readers  
(Pearson Education)
- Marie Clay 'Running Record' method
- Norwegian National Tests (NNT) writing tasks  
and CEFR-linked criteria
- Funding for transcribing
- ECML partnership (Spain, Slovenia, Lithuania)

# Detailed procedure for reading (cyclical)

1. Adapt and use running record of reading to establish reader level of each individual
2. Analyse the language (+ visual support) of texts at each level for description purposes
3. *Match reader levels to CEFR levels based on analysis and intuition (researcher/teacher)*
4. *Create descriptors which can be used to place stories at CEFR levels*
5. *Provide record of reading for pupil and teacher*

# On-the-spot running record

Copy up first 100 words of text

As pupil reads, mark with code  
errors/unknown words

Regard roughly 90-95 words as range  
indicating pupil is 'at' this level

# Preliminary rough analysis of texts across reading levels

*Using vocabulary analysis (Kids spoken vocabulary list, Nation and Cobb, 2008),  
and Flesch Reading Ease Formula,*

Early signs are that level of ease is a complex function of low frequency of vocabulary, repetition and no. of words per sentence.

(Need much more...)

# Sample text reader level 1

- Here are Town Mouse
- and Country Mouse.
- The two mice are good friends.
- “Please come to the country for lunch.”
- “Thank you,”
- Town Mouse answers.
- “What`s this?”
- Town Mouse asks. “It`s a cow,”
- Country Mouse answers.
- “What`s this?” Town Mouse asks.
- “It`s an apple tree,” Country Mouse answers.
- “I`m hungry. Let`s have lunch,”
- Country Mouse says.

# Detailed procedure for writing (cyclical)

- Give task which most can manage with alternative(s) for weaker pupils
- Analyse/comment on the language of each pupil focussing on distinguishing/developmental features, then use/adapt NNT criteria to give profile of pupil, linked to CEFR
- *Validate CEFR levels for pupils, using teacher's intuition*
- *Adapt criteria/CEFR descriptors to reflect distinguishing/developmental features and teachers' intuition*
- *Provide record of writing for pupil and teacher*

## Writing sample A2/B1

- Once a day two mates were on a boat<trip>. When they were close to Madagascar do Kyle note that the boat were <sink>ing!  
When they was in the wather Rob and Kyle saw a shark!  
-Å, no!! Scream both of them.  
-What are we going to do?! scream Rob.  
Their swim for their's lives.  
And lucy they! They did it! They were on Madagascar...  
-How are going back now? Says Rob.  
One hour later found Rob a treasure. And to the right of the treasure it was a battle. Kyle took it up, but there was it a <spirit>.  
-<I will give you three wishes!>  
-I wants a ballet-dress! Says Kyle.  
POFF! And he get it.  
-I wants a eletric toy-car  
POFF! And he get it.  
-<Now you only have one wish left>. says the spirit.  
-I wish i - we could have a great <meal>.  
Says Kyle.  
-Å, No!! You are so silly!! :< :! says Rob.  
-Why?! I'am so hungry!  
-Yes, me to! But we could eaten when we come home! Says Rob.  
-I new that you wanna <repent> on it! So you can wish one more time. Says the spirit.  
-Thank you so very mutch!  
Than we wish to be home! Say Rob.  
PIFF..... POFF..... And than both of them was home.

## Assessment of sample + previous (post card)

<p>1. A2 Post card. 12/07</p>	<p>Communicates very well – imaginative. Does task well. Sentences fairly simple, with short clauses – 1 CP (because). Series of facts, simply linked. Vocabulary quite good for task. – <i>spellings (mutch, tere, because, te)</i></p>
<p>2. A2/B1 Story 02/08</p>	<p>Good creative story with dialogue. Longer sentences – mainly simple but with complex phrases, adverbials. Paragraphing. Some use of past tense, e.g. <i>saw, did, found</i>, but alternatives with present. Attempts 'could (<i>could eaten</i>). Vocabulary good (e.g. <i>repent</i>) and idiomatic (<i>what are we going to do</i>).</p> <p>Errors. Word order (<i>do Kyle note that, one hour later found Bob a ..</i>), agreement – <i>was/were</i>. etc Spellings, generally good, but <i>mutch</i></p>

# Preliminary analysis of features in writing

Sig = indications of significance

<b>No. of words</b>	Sig.	Ratio repeat vbs	
T-units		Correct verbs	
<b>Wds/t-unit</b>	Sig.	<b>Ratio correct verbs</b>	Sig.
Token/type		Corr past tense	
<b>No. of clauses</b>	Sig.	Slot past tense	
Clauses/t-unit		<b>Ratio corr. Past ten.</b>	sig
Attempted verbs		<b>Vocab 1st 2 bands</b>	sig
Different verbs		<b>Ratio misformed wd</b>	sig

Above B1	Is able to create quite complicated texts, using effects such as switching tense and interspersing dialogue with ease. The more common linking words are used quite skilfully.	Sentences can contain a wide variety of clause types, with frequent complex clauses. Errors in basic grammar only occur from time to time.	Vocabulary may be very wide, although the range is not generally sufficient to allow stylistic choices to be made.	Spellings only occur from time to time.
B1	Is able to write texts on themes which are beyond the immediately familiar, where the message has some complication. Common linking words are used.	Is able to create quite long and varied sentences with complex phrases, e.g. adverbials. Basic grammar is more often correct than not.	Vocabulary is generally made up of frequent words and phrases, but this does not seem to restrict the message. Some idiomatic phrases used appropriately.	Most sentences do not contain spelling errors
A2/B1	Is able to make reasonable attempt at texts on familiar themes, that are not completely linear, including very simple narratives. Clauses are normally linked using very common words, such as and, then	Sentences contain some longer clauses, and signs are shown of awareness of basic grammar, including past tenses.	Vocabulary is made up of very common words, but is not limited to a very restricted range.	Spelling errors may occur in most sentences.
A2	Can write short straightforward linear messages on very familiar themes, with some variety in types of information presented.	Is able to make own sentences, generally made up of short, simple clauses with a limited number of underlying structures .	Vocabulary made up of very frequent words but has sufficient words and phrases to make an understandable simple message, using a limited number of verbs.	Little evidence of knowledge of spelling and punctuation rules.
A1/A2	Can adapt a few learnt patterns to make a series of very short sentences. This may be a short description or set of related facts on a very familiar personal theme, e.g. a person or place.		Can use some words which may resemble L1, but are on the whole the message is recognisable to a reader who does not know the L1.	
A1	Can write a small number of learnt words and fixed phrases.			

# Major challenges ahead

- Analysis of story texts
- What features to include in descriptors
- How to set CEFR levels
- How to word feedback forms for pupils
- How to make running record form simple enough to use and complex enough to be worthwhile..
- Etc, etc, etc

# Working with YLs involves:

- Giving (at least) as much as getting
- Being sensitive to each individual's needs/problems
- Being patient
- Getting rewards you never expected

# References

- Clay, M. 2000. *Running Records for Teachers*. Heinemann.
- Cobb, T. 2008. 'Ten 250-word Stemach and Williams kid spoken vocab lists'  
[http://www.lex tutor.ca/vp/kids/kid\\_list\\_display/](http://www.lex tutor.ca/vp/kids/kid_list_display/)
- Penguin Young Readers. Pearson Educational.